

Part 6: Last Full Day Cherokee Sound and Beyond

With our thirst quenched and stomachs full we headed back to the mini van and back to the road main road since we also had [Cherokee Sound](#) on our adventure list for today. After finally reaching the main road we hang a left and off we go. The road is fairly new and which enables the residence of Cherokee to now drive all the way to their settlement. It's interesting and I guess a sign of the new times that now they are starting to develop a gated community of condos. Along with that there is lot of reality signs along the way

advertising ocean front lots for sale. Cherokee is an old fishing village with concrete block single story homes a very small grocery store and a community hall. It does have an extra long pier that extends out into Cherokee Sound. The pier looks to be new construction using native lumber and pine trees as the pilings.

To reach the pier you must cross a small stream that drains from the mango swamps into the sound.



With our trip complete and a few more stops planned on the way back to the marina we took our leave of the lower Abaco Island and headed back to Marsh Harbor. Speeding along and still remembering to stay on the left we backtracked with out trusty navigator calling the turns, well, all of one intersection, we felt that even us back seat drivers could handle that. The terms of the rental was that the van was to returned with a full tank of gas, we found a station and gas prices on the island, at that time was \$4.25 per gal for their one and only grade, regular. We also decided that since we had a van why not stop at the food market and pickup some supplies. I was surprised after entering the market it was large, clean, very wide isles, and very well stocked with all the goods that we normally expect in a food store in the states. Naturally the prices were on some goods higher then what we pay in the states but not that much higher considering that all the food supplies must be brought in via supply ships. After that it was the liquor store since I at least wanted to take back my legal limit, one gallon, of duty free liquor. The store that we stopped in was A&K Liquor's which we found the day before on our scouting for booze walk. This was the only liquor store on the island that had a sampling station next to the counter with an array of rums and local liquors to sample complete with little cups. Now that's that way to go, sample before you purchase.

After returning to the marina and as the sun was going down on our last day we all had a another rum punch and just enjoyed sitting back and doing the Abaco Island specialty, watching life go by and being



thankful that we could enjoy a great setting and listening for the evening calls of the conch.

Being that it was our last day in the island and we had to be at the airport by 12:00 for a flight back home we decided that since



there were only 4 bars within walking distance why not go to each and have just one drink and then proceed to the next for another drink. In that way we could all say good bye and celebrate a great vacation. Well, we made the first two bars and had our one drink skipped the third since it looked like it was closing and so we ended up at Curly Tails for a few more.

With the evening winding down, knowing that in the morning we would have to jam all our stuff back into our bags, we all decided that tonight was extra special with being with friends and that our 6 days in the islands would be a trip to remember for sometime.



Of course the girls would have none of walking quietly back to the boats they, wanted to form another Congo line down the pier. We men, which did not have as much rum drinks as the girls, stood firm as usual and just guarded the sides of the dock to insure that the Congo line stayed on the dock.



Chapter #8: Returning to Real Life

Well, the final morning came, the sun was out the wind had calmed down, and the temperature was on the rise in a nut shell it looked like another fine day in the Abaco. Since this was the last morning we all voted to give our fabulous morning chief chef a well deserved rest and elected to go out for breakfast. So, back to Curly Tails to try their lower level restaurant and leave the rum punches in the bottles for a change, well almost we did have to finish the small amount left from yesterday.

Having already arranged for a van to pick us up at the marina we trudged back to the marina, saying goodbye to George's Conk stand and Sapodilly's Bar and Grill along the way, after all we had to have time to jam all our stuff back into our bags and lug them back up the pier. We all arranged to meet at the marina office about 11:30, our van was there and I kind of think that the van driver had some reservations about this charter seeing all 9 of us plus Abby, the dog that really thinks she's a person, standing around that she might need a bigger van. But, have no fear there were only 4 of us going back to the real world of cold and snow. Piling into the van and making sure that all our bags and other treasures were jammed into the back we took off towards the only traffic light and the airport and our meeting with Bubba.

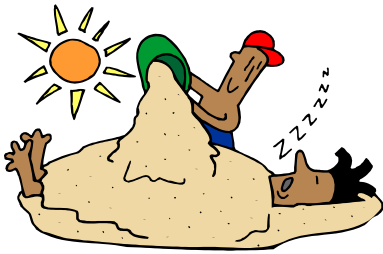
Now, you have to try to imagine what the airport is like, One concrete block building that I would say would be perhaps 30' by 50' were perhaps 20' feet of that is used for customs and arriving passengers while in the remaining section there are 4 flight counters, two restrooms, one office, and a refreshment stand all smooched together and couple that about 50 people

checking in it makes a very noisy place. American Airlines only has only one round trip flight a day, an American Eagle AT7 which has a capacity of 60 people, arriving and departing an hour later for the return flight back to Miami. The check in procedure is fairly simple, stand in line at the airline's counter to get your boarding ticket and check in of your luggage and check your passport then wait for the plane. Well, the time finally comes to "board" which seems to occur about a few minutes before the scheduled departure time. At that time you lug your baggage to a table just out side the boarding gate and customs does a quick check to insure you're not carrying a live pine tree or what ever, then comes Bubba. Bubba is a very large guy and is the electronic expert with the magic wand and his job is to wand you once you step on his mat and place you feet on the marks. I must say he is very good at his job and I've been told that if you inform him that you have a metal implant he will agree not to wand that area. In the mean time you have 50 to 60 people crowding around the area waiting for signal to board the plane which has been sitting in the hot sun for about 45 minuets. Oh well, we are still on island time and eventually everything will get done. We have recently found out that officials on the Abaco Island have announced that they will be repaving, and extending the airfield by a 1000' and should be ready soon, Abaco time that is. They are also planning to take care of drainage a problem that forces the strip to close in heave rain. After boarding and taxing around the airstrip we bounce down the runway and lift into the clear blue sky. Looking out the window we see, the Great Abaco Island which is a portion of the Bahama Island chain below, surrounded by shades of deep crystal clear blue water.

A great web site to read about the local happening is [The Abaconian](#) which is hailed as "Abaco's most complete newspaper".

The trip was truly a learning experience in where we were introduced to other cruisers and could ask questions such as, what does it take to be out there? Also, we were introduced to a different life style where it really didn't matter if you got whatever you had planned to do completed today or tomorrow. We found that the generosity of the cruisers that we meet were remarkable in that when someone had a problem someone else was there to assist.

I want to thank our gracious host and hostess for inviting us to spend the time with them and showing us such a great way of living in the islands.



There is a saying in the Abaco Islands, that after you leave the islands and if you find sand in your shoes you will be back. Guess what we found?